

MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WORLDWIDE TREATMENT
OF CURRENT ISSUES

Kissinger Latin America Trip - III

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Le Monde **Frankfurter Allgemeine**
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Summary

As Secretary Kissinger's trip to Latin America drew to a close, media comment in the area centered on concern about the U. S. -Brazil agreement and the global power role in which it cast Brazil.

(See Worldwide Treatment of Current Issues No. 14 of February 20 for initial reaction to the agreement.)

Brazilian papers, following some initial gratification at their country's enhanced position, increasingly stressed fears that the agreement would adversely affect their relations with the rest of Latin America and that it would not help solve trade problems.

Thus Diario Popular of Sao Paulo said it might "create difficulties in our relations with our neighbors without bringing us any return from Washington." O Estado de Sao Paulo complained that "almost 10 per cent of the U. S. trade surplus is generated by Brazil.... No relations can prosper under such conditions.... This imbalance simply cannot continue...."

Commentators in other countries of the area expressed individual and general concerns.

La Opinion of Buenos Aires judged that "unless Argentina reacts quickly, she is destined to be classed as a third-rate power in the area."

El Tiempo of Bogota said the "new axis" was a "compliment to Latin America on the one hand but also reinforces the trend to rigid and authoritarian governments."

Ultimas Noticias of Caracas called it a "grave error on Kissinger's part to elect Brazil as the leader."

Media in other parts of the world widely played wire service stories that the agreement was expected to arouse suspicions of a U. S. attempt to establish a Washington-Brasilia "axis" and woo Brazil away from the third world, but comment was sparse.

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BRABAA

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L A T I N A M E R I C ABRAZIL"U.S. Business Wants More Trade Restrictions on Brazil!"

Three days after his departure, the consequences of Secretary Kissinger's visit continued to be of major concern to Brazilian media. Apprehension that trade restrictions might not be relaxed fed skepticism about benefits of the U.S. - Brazil agreement.

Conservative Correio Braziliense of Brasilia headlined today: "Blockade! American Business Wants More Restrictions on Brazilian Imports." This was superimposed over a story that "the International Trade Commission" had "recommended to President Ford a substantial increase in tariffs on shoe imports, especially those produced in Brazil.

"The problem of surtaxes on Brazilian shoes was one of the main subjects discussed by Kissinger in Brazil and it is believed there were even promises that the problem would be reviewed in order to eliminate certain items classified by the Secretary himself as 'irritants' in U.S. trade relations with Brazil..."

The article suggested that as a quid pro quo there had been an understanding that "Brazil would not join an OPEC-style cartel in exchange for a review of the trade act..."

"Strategy to Keep Brazil From Third-World Leadership?"

On Sunday, the paper had headlined: "Kissinger Visit Raises Much Controversy and Hope." The paper said that "Kissinger's press conference statement welcoming Brazil into the club of the rich...and as an emerging power did not have the repercussions which he certainly expected them to have..." It suggested that the Secretary "may be working toward a next step, a strategy proposed by the Pentagon and the State Department to sponsor Brazil's joining the Atlantic Community as an honorary member, like Japan and Canada, thus preventing its becoming a leader of the third world..."

"U. S. Rediscovery of Latin America"

Today's independent conservative O Estado de Sao Paulo praised the U. S. "rediscovery of Latin America" and particularly its "deepening of special relations with Brazil...

"Kissinger's diplomatic tour of Latin America has a positive aspect. It certifies that...the U. S. Government is beginning to be aware that its relations with other nations of the Western Hemisphere may assume decisive importance for the future of the U. S. and of the Western world at large. This is true mainly as a consequence of the process of progressive and accelerated disintegration of the Western system in Asia and Africa, where one country after another is becoming aligned in the socialist bloc..."

"U. S. -Brazil Trade Imbalance Cannot Continue"

However, the paper had made it clear in its Sunday economic supplement that the "message for Kissinger to take back to the U. S. is that the number-one problem of Brazil-U. S. relations is trade...Almost 10 per cent of the U. S. trade surplus is generated by Brazil...No relationship can prosper under such conditions... This imbalance simply cannot continue..."

Colombian Paper Cited on Fears About "Axis"

Moderate Jornal do Brasil of Rio headlined today: "Bogota Repudiates Hegemonies on the Continent," citing Colombia's El Tiempo as saying "the axis with Brazil will awaken fears in countries...which regard Brazil's emerging influence with understandable fears..."

Criticism of New York Times Editorial

The paper criticized the Saturday New York Times editorial which disapproved of the Secretary's according special status to Brazil, saying that the attribution of the status of an emergent power to Brazil "is above all a form of courtesy..."

"False Fears of Other Nations"

Today's conservative O Globo of Rio, in an editorial titled "Protests Against Brazil," complained against "adverse reactions throughout the Continent against

the significance" of Secretary Kissinger's "mission and the inter-American community spirit." The paper said such criticism resulted from "crass misrepresentation" and was a "product of overexcited imagination," leading to the false idea of "a predominant axis between the continental giants of the North and South, with the other countries under the threat of such an alliance."

The paper concluded that "Brazil will not abdicate its own development and its normal wishes to become a priority power."

"Agreement May Bring Difficult Relations But No Gain"

Nationalistic Diario Popular of Sao Paulo said yesterday while "the document signed by Kissinger and da Silveira was written in very flexible language so that neither of the two countries is deeply pledged to it," and while "it may please our national pride...it may also create difficulties in our relations with our neighbors without bringing us any return from Washington..."

"Illusion That Kissinger Can Suspend U.S. Duties"

U.S. correspondent Pimenta Neves of business-oriented Gazeta Mercantil of Sao Paulo yesterday considered the visit "probably one of the rare happy moments in the Secretary of State's troubled performance over the past year."

But a commentator on the paper said the visit was a "failure" in the eyes of those who labored under the "illusion" that the Secretary can "by himself eliminate or suspend the countervailing duties..."

"Merely a Declaration of Intention"

The weekly news magazine Veja said the visit brought "no earth-shaking political or economic consequences..."

"It is a declaration of intentions which can become a dead letter if there is no political will on both sides to use it adequately..."

ARGENTINA

Papers Play Concern Over U. S. -Brazil Agreement

Papers in Argentina gave the later stages of Secretary Kissinger's trip prominent and extensive coverage, but in comment continued to express concern over the Secretary's declaration regarding the future role of Brazil in world affairs and the bilateral consultation he envisaged between Washington and Brasilia.

Nationalist Clarín today ran a front-page photograph of Dr. Kissinger and Colombian President Lopez Michelsen under the heading, "U. S. -Brazil Agreement Criticized," and on an inside-page story used a six-column head saying, "Criticism of U. S. and Brazil Grows Heavier." A summary of the story, a composite of wire service dispatches, said:

"Venezuela's principal political leaders and The New York Times criticized in severe terms the pre-eminent role Kissinger ascribed to Brazil in Hemisphere relations. In Bogota, it was claimed that the agreement contains clearly negative aspects."

"Brazil's Strength Brought Status"

On Sunday that paper asserted that the U. S. had granted Argentina's "neighbor a status of privilege," remarking that "it is too early to measure the consequences but it should be underscored that they have become a priority interest for us."

"It is not premature to assert that the status achieved by Brazil originated in the objective fact of its increased strength, rather than in a U. S. initiative recognizing it."

"Major Diplomatic Defeat for Argentina"

Intellectual-left Opinion today gave a full page to news and comment on the Kissinger trip. Columnist Enrique Alonso called "the privileged partnership between the U. S. and Brazil... Argentina's major diplomatic defeat." He said the Government of Brazil "has realized its longtime desire to achieve the leading role in control of events in the South Atlantic and strengthening its relations with Africa."

"The evolution of the political process in Angola (which in Argentina was followed with as little interest as if it were taking place on the moon) no doubt acted as a catalyst of the U.S. decision, which Brazil, on the other hand, constantly invited by its fast-paced economic growth and even by unconventional steps like its nuclear agreement with West Germany and its association with France to promote investments in the Black Continent. "

Alonso suggested that "Kissinger's brief but significant words on the problem of human rights will enhance the Brazilian Government's chances of achieving political and social relaxation." He concluded:

"Unless Argentina reacts quickly, she is destined to be classified as a third-rate power in the area. For the moment, it is legitimate to ask whether it will be possible from now on...to hold bilateral negotiations on problems pending between Argentina and Brazil. "

"Suspicion of Aim to Cause Disunity"

Financial Cronista Comercial carried a byliner's observation that "Kissinger cannot be ignorant of the impact his words had on the sensitive Hemisphere audience.

"The unfavorable repercussions in Venezuela indicates some suspicion that the declaration of Brasilia...was aimed at causing disunity among the Latin American countries. "

Yesterday the paper saw evidence that "State Department objectives were to face up to the experience drawn from the failure of the new dialogue, placing emphasis on those countries which have traditionally been friendly while maintaining merely formal ties with those that are not fully acquiescent in U.S. policies..."

"Brazil's Ambitions a Source of Fear"

Conservative independent La Prensa headlined on Sunday, "Pact Without Precedent in U.S. Relations with Latin America." The paper stressed that "the risks of the new policy lie in the establishment of a special consultative relationship with Brazil, whose ambitions in Latin America are a source of fear to its neighbors." Nevertheless, it added, "the U.S. authorities are prepared to face general Latin American alarm over" such a special relationship.

COLOMBIA

"Sees World Peace Role for the Hemisphere"

In an editorial today which reviewed the effects of the Secretary's Latin American tour, liberal El Tiempo of Bogota concluded that as a "messenger of good will, he definitely foresees that the countries of the Hemisphere will eventually be in a position to take part in underwriting world peace and international understanding..."

"Agreement Reinforces Authoritarian Trend"

The paper commented yesterday on the U.S. -Brazil accord in an editorial entitled "The New Axis." It found "both positive and negative aspects to the agreement... It is a compliment to Latin America on the one hand but it also reinforces the trend to rigid and authoritarian governments."

Liberal El Espectador and conservative La Republica gave equally close attention to covering all aspects of the Secretary's visit. Their stories speculated on the Secretary's future and welcomed the warmth, informality and humor he displayed in the Hato Grande press conference.

Also yesterday, liberal El Pueblo of Cali, hitherto anti-U.S. in tone, used expressions such as "a new diplomacy" and "looking forward to concrete results from the visit" which the paper hoped would "further the establishment of a Hemispheric policy."

VENEZUELA

Papers Cite Doubts of Political Leaders

Papers today carried extensive coverage of Latin American reaction to the U.S. - Brazil agreement.

Independent El Nacional ran President Perez' statement that the accord "has been received by international analysts with some concern."

Independent Ultimas Noticias, after the fashion of Venezuelan newspapers, today did a roundup of comment from prominent figures of political parties.

Using the title, "Grave Error on Kissinger's Part to Elect Brazil as Leader" and the subhead, "Venezuelan Politicians Condemn Unusual Pact," the paper led with the comment of a ruling AD party spokesman who said he "agrees totally" with the New York Times because Secretary Kissinger "overstepped the bounds in praising the excellence of...a neighboring republic."

A COPEI official said, "Brazil should not be converted into a U.S. lackey." "Be alert for a Washington-Brazilian axis," a Perez Jimenista stated. An MEP leader declared it to be "a strategic error of Kissinger's" and an URD official termed it "a repetition of the Nixon doctrine."

"We Should Develop as Brazil Has"

A writer for the paper on Sunday cited veteran commentator Luis Esteban Rey of business-oriented El Universal as saying, "We must remember that Brazil is the first economic power of Latin America and additionally that it has a territorial dimension that makes it very important within our Hemisphere. It is logical that the U.S. would consider these realities in its relationship with Brazil. What we other countries should do is develop as much as Brazil has."

PERU

"Policy Announcement Scares Many 'Partners'"

Government-controlled El Comercio of Lima remarked Sunday that Mr. Kissinger announced his Hemisphere policy "in such terms that it will scare many 'partners for progress.'"

It said: "The U.S. diplomatic chief has made known to his friends that he has not come to 'overwhelm problems with resources or to disguise differences with assistance programs, but with patience, maturity, compassion and a willingness to identify genuine mutualities of interest.'..."

"Having always contended that (there are) many secret American organizations--supported and financed by the U. S. -- that have practiced international corruption and the buying of loyalties during the last few decades, we have the suspicion that this offering of patience, maturity and compassion will not be liked by many people."

The paper also took the view that the "quick visit of Secretary Kissinger has not caused any change in the firmness and realism of Peruvian foreign policy... Kissinger said what everybody expected and convinced nobody.... His pretensions are unacceptable and impossible.... But Dr. Kissinger would not be what he is, the Foreign Minister of Capitalism, if he did not attempt to sell holy water.... He wants Peru to abandon its third world policy of complete solidarity with the mutual defense of the raw materials producers..."

"A Visit Satisfactory for Our Country"

In contrast the Sunday issue of La Prensa stated, "On balance, the Kissinger visit seems satisfactory for our country. Our position has been made clear and so has that of the U. S. in a friendly and sincere way. We have strengthened relations within a climate of equality and mutual comprehension with the U. S...."

The magazine Oiga set the mood for its description of the Secretary's visit as follows: "There were neither cheers nor shouts. There were a few curious spectators, possibly policemen, that made the official reception taking place under an oppressive sun seem even more languid..." It said that although "he offered his best side with the biggest of smiles for the photographers... in Lima he had few opportunities to smile..."

MEXICO

"Brazil Does Not Play a Decisive Role"

Mexican commentators differed on the significance of the Kissinger visit to Latin America and the U. S. -Brazil agreement.

Left-of-center El Sol de Mexico said Saturday that in recognizing Brazil as a future world power, Dr. Kissinger "was only trying to secure interests of U.S. transnational companies operating in Brazil." It said he was wrong in trying to elevate Brazil to the category of nations like Japan because "Brazil does not play a decisive political and economic role in Latin America and also... lacks social justice."

In another editorial the paper said "Costa Rican President Daniel Oduber is absolutely right in saying that U.S. -Latin American relations are at their lowest level in years." It suggested that perhaps the Kissinger trip was "an effort to change this situation. However, he should outline in detail his six-point economic and political plan announced in Caracas to improve U.S. -Latin American relations. Otherwise, Kissinger's words will continue to represent only unfilled promises."

"Kissinger Is Right About Brazil as a Power"

Moderate Novedades maintained that Brazil "has made significant progress in the past few years to the point that it is today the most powerful Latin American nation..."

"Kissinger is right...in stating that Brazil is on the verge of becoming a world power, and when this happens there will be many political changes in the southern portion of the Hemisphere."

"U.S., Latin America Do Not Know Each Other"

Columnist Luis Ortiz Monasterio of liberal Excelsior said Dr. Kissinger's negotiating power had diminished to the point that "Latin America does not know if it is dealing with the true representative of U.S. policy or only with a U.S. public relations agent." He called for practical solutions to improve relations and added:

"The U.S. and Latin America do not know each other at all because their leaders often devote more time to rhetoric than to investigating the true causes of their differences."

Communist-Oriented Paper: "Maintaining U.S. Hegemony"

A writer in Communist-oriented El Dia declared that the Kissinger trip would "give time to the consolidation of right-wing regimes in Latin America under the excuse of Cuban involvement in Angola. "

He said the nations of the region should be aware that Dr. Kissinger was "only trying to maintain U.S. hegemony over the southern portion of the Hemisphere. "

EL SALVADOR

"Only Congress Can Change Trade Law"

Today's conservative La Prensa Grafica of San Salvador expressed doubts about the practical results of the meetings between Secretary Kissinger and the Central American foreign ministers.

It said, "Since the U.S. trade act is under legislative control, only Congress can change it....Although the Secretary has been in favor of a mutually satisfactory solution for the Panama Canal issue, the end result on the question is out of his hands. "

The paper said further that as to "the other point, the dispute between Honduras and El Salvador, Kissinger may come up with a suggestion for resolving it but the leaders of both nations have the final word..."

It also carried a jump-page story by AP on "worries in Venezuela arising from according Brazil the status of a world power..."

GUATEMALA

"A Gesture of Human Solidarity"

Full prominence to the Secretary's forthcoming visit was given by Guatemalan papers today.

Mass-circulation Prensa Libre said: "The Secretary's visit is a gesture of human solidarity from the Government of President Ford and the people of the U.S. with the people of Guatemala in the great tragedy they have suffered..."

WESTERN EUROPE

WEST GERMANY

"Dialogue With Equality...Brazil in the Forefront"

West German media have closely followed Secretary Kissinger's travels in Latin America but comment has been sparse.

Independent Stuttgarter Zeitung said on Saturday that "Kissinger had promised to seek a new dialogue with Latin American countries on the basis of equality.

"One country seems to be in the forefront of his interest...Brazil...

"That Washington underlines Brazil's role so emphatically may give rise to concern in other Latin American countries lest the U.S. support Brazilian efforts at hegemony. Kissinger's attempt to bring about a new dialogue with Latin America would fail if it were restricted to discussions between the existing (U.S.) world power and the coming (Brazilian) world power."

"Pure Power Politics"

Yesterday's left-center Frankfurter Rundschau asked, "What prompted Kissinger to refer to Brazil as a 'world power' and, by concluding a special agreement, to affront the smaller Latin America countries?... He obviously is relying on pure power politics to keep Latin America 'stable.' He considers Brazil America's most suitable 'natural' ally.

"Brazil has an almighty military dictatorship oriented to Washington and is tied to the U.S. economy more closely than any other Latin American country.... That is why Brazil is well suited to act as Washington's satrap in Latin America..."

TV: "His Timing Was Not Bad"

First-network West German television Sunday night carried a commentator's view that "what at first glance looks like a perfunctory exercise... is a visit that is necessary as never before. The U.S. now must try to find friends, if that is still at all possible.... Since America's change of heart in the case of Angola, even the neutral African states are reconsidering..."

Noting U.S. voices critical of Dr. Kissinger's approach to the military government in Brazil, he said "the time is past... when the overseas public praised the American press for its self-criticism. Admiration gave way to malicious joy at first, then to deep concern which is proportional to the extent to which U.S. domestic and foreign policy has shown a lack of responsibility and miscalculation. America has enough enemies. All it needs now is friends. When Henry Kissinger is courting Brazil, the radical change in the relationship between North and South America becomes evident." The commentator then observed:

"Although some Latin American presidents are refusing to meet Kissinger, the timing of his visit was not bad. The reason is Cuba. The island republic has, over the last few years, succeeded in acting independently of the U.S. and has even managed to form an economic league which is clearly directed against the U.S.

"Now that Cuba has openly shown its aggressiveness in Angola, even the Latin Americans are having doubts about Castro not wanting to export his revolution to the continent..."

"The fear of militant Communism is on the increase again in Latin America: no wonder the U.S. Secretary of State is looking for solidarity there."

BRITAIN

Remarks in Colombia on Multinationals

London papers generally held to news coverage of the trip in recent days.

Today's independent Financial Times carried the report of Washington correspondent David Bell that "the U.S. is prepared to include rules against bribery in the international code of conduct for multinational companies that it has been trying to draft Dr. Kissinger...disclosed in Colombia..."

Bell said "State Department officials confirmed that work has been going on for some time on a possible draft agreement that would cover every facet of the behavior of multinational corporations overseas but said no precise details had yet been worked out." He observed:

"Dr. Kissinger's desire to secure some kind of international agreement springs partly from his feeling that U.S. companies have been singled out unfairly for criticism and partly from his fears that U.S. foreign policy interests are being harmed by the stream of revelations."

EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

MALAYSIA

"Kissinger Should Now Review Policies Toward Developing Nations"

Chinese-language Nanyang Siang Pau of Kuala Lumpur judged today that "apart from the accord reached with Brazil, Kissinger has achieved no concrete results on his visit to the six Latin American states.

"However, he will attain greater achievement if he makes the best of the response to his visit as the basis for further review of America's policies toward developing nations, especially to make them consistent with the six assurances offered by Kissinger to the Latin American nations."

PAKISTAN

"Suspicion About a Washington-Brasilia Axis?"

Government-owned leftist Pakistan Times of Lahore and Rawalpindi gave front-page treatment yesterday to the signing of the U. S. -Brazil agreement for regular political and economic consultations.

It carried a Reuter report that the agreement was "expected to arouse suspicion that the U. S. was seeking to establish a new Washington-Brasilia axis." The report also cited Mr. Kissinger as saying, "What we are doing here is not an exclusive arrangement, but something we are prepared to do with other nations with similar objectives."

COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

SOVIET UNION

"No Palpable Results"

Moscow domestic service said on Sunday that "it is clear from reports that so far Kissinger's trip...has yielded no palpable results."

POLAND

U. S. -Brazil-South Africa Link?

The Polish Press Agency (PAP) reported last Friday that Sztandar Mlodych (The Banner of Youth) saw the Secretary's principal topic of discussion in Brazil "the possibility of setting up a pact linking the U. S. , Brazil and the Republic of South Africa, this being closely related to the victory of the left in Angola." The paper went on to say that "nobody, even in the U. S. , believes that Henry Kissinger's trip may bring about any major change of relations with Latin America...The moves being made by American diplomacy are designed to show the electorate that the Ford Administration is not neglecting any of the relevant problems."

YUGOSLAVIA

"Returns Home Without Achieving Key Points"

A Buenos Aires correspondent wrote today in Belgrade's Politika that "Secretary Kissinger is returning to Washington without accomplishing his key points," though "Kissinger and his Brazilian colleague Azeredo da Silvera signed (an) agreement which emphasizes a new system of relations between the two countries. This cooperation should be the bedrock of Washington's policy south of the Rio Bravo."

The correspondent said Mr. Kissinger put into focus the security of the Western Hemisphere and "warned that the U. S. would not stand for the 'export of violence' anywhere in the world." He also reported that Venezuelan President Andres Perez had told the Secretary that "future relations between the two Americas can be based only on the principle of equality between states. Latin America... wants the improvement of relations with the U. S. ... in a constructive way... The time of the 'big stick' policy is over."